

Message Text

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DEPARTMENT PASS US GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VA.,
AND DENVER, COLORADO.

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BENC EMIN MX
SUBJ: MAJOR EXPORT OPPORTUNITY: COMPUTER SOFTWARE FOR PHOSPHATE
ROCK MINING & PROCESSING.

REF: (A) STATE 201106; (B) MEXICO 2177.

1. MINOFF DISCUSSED QUESTIONS RAISED IN REF A WITH ING.
ENRIQUE BARRUEL ON AUGUST 13 AND WITH DR. GUILLERMO SALAS,
HEAD OF THE MINERAL RESOURCES COUNCIL AND A MEMBER OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF COMPAÑIA ROCA FOSFORICA (CRF).
SALAS PREVIOUSLY BRIEFED MINOFF ON BAJA PHOSPHATES AS PER
REF B.

2. BULK SAMPLE ANALYSIS OF ROCK IS CURRENTLY BEING DONE
BY GOM LABORATORIES, BY THE USGS LAB IN DENVER, COLO., AND
BY A GERMAN COMPANY. RESULTS WILL BE AVAILABLE ABOUT
APRIL 1977. JIM CATEHART (SP.?) IN DENVER IS FAMILIAR
WITH THE OPERATION. ANOTHER GOM LAB IS WORKING ON
BENEFICIATION PROCESSES. GOAL IS TO UPGRADE ORE TO 30 PERCENT
P TWO O FIVE WITH 70-80 PERCENT RECOVERY RATE FROM
SLIMES.

3. CIA. ROCA FOSFORICA IS TALKING ABOUT COMPLETION OF A
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1.3 MILLION MT PILOT PLANT BY THE END OF 1977. ACCORDING

TO SALES, THIS IS TOTALLY UNREALISTIC, SINCE, AS YET,
NO ECONOMICALLY FEASIBLE BENEFICIATION PROCESS HAS BEEN
DEVELOPED. 1980 IS A MORE REASONABLE TARGET.

4. CRF WILL PROBABLY CONTRACT FOR AN OVERALL FEASIBILITY STUDY BY THE END OF SEPTEMBER. SOFREMIN, S.A., A FRANCO-MEXICAN COMPANY, IS LIKELY TO GET THE NOD. IBCON'S STUDY SEEMS TO BE AN ENTIRELY SEPARATE UNDERTAKING WITH LITTLE OR NO RELATION TO THE MORE GENERAL PLANNING.

5. PROJECT WILL BE FINANCED BY GOM REVENUES, SUPPLIER CREDITS, AND LOANS FROM INTERNATIONAL AND PRIVATE LENDERS.

6. PRODUCTION WILL BE SOLD TO FERTILIZANTES FOSFATADOS MEXICANOS TO REPLACE ROCK CURRENTLY BEING IMPORTED.
PRODUCTION IN EXCESS OF DOMESTIC DEMAND WILL BE EXPORTED EITHER AS BENEFICIATED ROCK OR AS FINISHED PRODUCTS.

7. IBCON STUDY APPEARS TO US TO BE AN ATTEMPT TO PRECLUDE THE POSSIBILITY THAT SOFREMIN WILL FIND THE PROJECT ECONOMICALLY UNFEASIBLE. SALAS WAS NOT REPEAT NOT AWARE OF IBCON'S EFFORTS AND BEMOANED THE FACT THAT MINING ENGINEERS WERE NOT PLAYING A DECISIVE ROLE IN CRF'S MANAGEMENT. EMBASSY CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT EARLY U.S. PARTICIPATION COULD STRONGLY INFLUENCE LATER DECISIONS ON SOURCES OF EQUIPMENT AND ENGINEERING SERVICES.

JOVA

NOTE BY OC/T: PASSED USGS RESTON, VA., AND USGS DENVER, COLO.

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